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George Alfred & James

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

People, Places and Events

WALLSBURG AND ITS FOUNDER

would ever see it again. As the wagons moved out of Round Valley she kept looking back until they passed over a hill and could no longer see the settlement. Then she cried all the way to Heber.

Now and then the Indians had stolen some of the cattle from the people, but generally left the people alone. However, the settlement was at least a day's wagon ride away from the other settlers in the valley, so it was decided in 1865 to build a fort for protection. Twenty families moved into the fort area when it was finished later that year.

Crops had been planted in Round Valley and so the men came back as often as they felt it was safe, and irrigated the fields. They reported that in their lonely travels between Heber and Round Valley they never once encountered an Indian.

As they came back to their homes they decided to build a meeting house for their Church services, school use and entertainment. Bringing cottonwood logs from the river bottoms and using mud to fill in the cracks the people put up the one room log house inside the fort walls.

As they plastered the mud on the walls they had to build fires and keep them going all night to dry the mud. The men said they would not consent to stay all night and keep the fires going unless the women folk stayed also. The women said they would agree to stay providing they could dance. So it was agreed, and they spent the entire night celebrating the completion of their Church house by dancing. A Brother Stocks furnished the music on his violin, but he only knew two tunes, "The Soldier's Joy" and "Irish Washer Woman." He played these over and over again all night.

Jennie Alfred and Harriette Greer were the only two who could waltz, so they entertained the others with their waltz steps. Bro. Stocks couldn't play any waltz tunes so the ladies whistled melodies in three-quarter time for their waltzing. They all participated in the square dances.

When the valley was first settled the farming was done on a cooperative basis. All the men worked together on the land and then at harvest time the crops were divided equitably among the families of the community. However, after a few years the farm land was divided into 20 and 40 acre tracts and the settlers applied for homesteading rights.

With the organization of a ward of the Church July 15, 1877 and the appointment of Bishop William E. Nuttall the people began looking for a suitable name for their ward and community. It was unanimously decided that Round Valley from henceforth should be Wallsburg in honor of the illustrious William Madison Wall, founder and "first citizen" of the community.

When events occur for the first time or when people achieve new things there is usually popular acclaim to remember the events or the people. There are many memorable "firsts" in Wallsburg, including the following:

The first school house and church building was constructed inside the fort area and Mrs. Lucina M. Boren was the first school teacher. The first school house outside the fort was the home of Martin Ford, and the first regular school building was on the property of George L. Batty. Miss Josephine Wall was teacher in 1859. Teachers who came to these first schools lived in the homes of Jennie Alfred, Susan Davis, Amber Ford and Mrs. John Graham.

Some of the first musicians that played for dances were William Baneroff, dulcimer; George Alfred, Amber, Martin and Alfred Ford, James Wheeler and William Davis who played the violin, organ and guitar. Mrs. Polly Mechem was the first doctor in Wallsburg and used herbs as well as faith and prayer in caring for the sick. Mrs. Annie Mechem, wife of John L. Mechem, also was an early doctor in the area.

The first irrigation ditches were made by W. J. Boren and William Haws.

The first post office was directed by William E. Nuttall and the mail was carried on horseback and carriage by Dixon Greer. The mail route from Wallsburg was to "String Town" or what was later Harry Watson's farm near Charleston. Other postmasters included S. D. Greer, George Dabbling, George P. Garff, Della Mechem, Orpha Wall and Alice C. Graham. Mail carriers included Abram Penrod, Elijah Davis, Ray Boren, Ellis Boren, Willard Davis, John Wall and Roy V. Loertscher.

The first manufacturing was the production of shingles. Owner of the first shingle mill was William Nuttall, John Parcell, Enoch Richens and Elijah Davis also owned an early mill. There were many good lumber mills and carpenters, including William Ford and Martin Ford Jr., who were especially skilled at manufacturing caskets.

The first piece of machinery brought to Round Valley was a mower and reaper owned by Martin Ford, Sr.

The first shoemakers were W. J. Boren, William Haws and Luke Burdick. Mr. Boren was also a skilled cabinetmaker. Early stores were owned by Dick Camp, James Alfred, Jacob Harris and Dixon Greer.

The first saw mill was owned by William Penrod, W. J. Boren and James Wheeler, William G. Nuttall and Daniel Bigelow also owned mills.

Early  
Wellsbury  
Settlers

Need Alfred  
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A. Wellsbury